

(b) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M V CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY) (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House to the extent available

DEBT Relief Scheme in Rajasthan and U.P.

6456 SHRI PRABHU DAYAL KATHERIA Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state

(a) the number of farmers, rural craftsmen and SC/ST people benefited under the Debt Relief Scheme in U.P. and Rajasthan,

(b) the amount of financial aid given to Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan so far under the above scheme,

(c) whether any amount of the said financial aid is yet to be released, and

(d) if so, the time by which it is likely to be given?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M V CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY) (a) Under the Agricultural and Rural Debt Relief (ARDR) Scheme, 1990, 51.45 lakhs (approx.) beneficiaries in the State of Uttar Pradesh and 20.16 lakhs (approx.) in Rajasthan were provided debt relief. Category-wise information is, however, not available

(b) to (d) National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has reported that as on 31.3.1995 it has released an amount of Rs. 638.014 crores and Rs. 311.457 crores to Cooperative Banks in Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan respectively by way of grant and loan under the ARDR Scheme. Similarly, Rs. 99.96 crores have been released to RRBs in Uttar Pradesh and Rs. 73.22 crores to RRBs in Rajasthan. NABARD has reported that claims of Cooperative Banks and RRBs in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh have been finally settled as per policy guidelines. RBI has reported that funds to Commercial Banks were not released State-wise, but claims preferred by individual public sector banks have been settled as per policy guidelines

Delay in Issuing Handbook of Procedures

6457 SHRI V SREENIVASA PRASAD Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "Delay in issuing handbook of procedures irks exporters" appeared in 'Pioneer' dated April 21, 1995,

(b) whether the delay in issuing handbook of procedures has affected exporters at large,

(c) if so, the details thereof, and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to issue handbook of procedures in time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P CHIDAMBARAM) (a) Yes, Sir

(b) to (d) The revised edition of the Hand-Book of Procedures, Vol. I 1992-97, has since been brought out on 30.4.1995. Since the previous Handbook of Procedures Vol. I in so far as it was not inconsistent with the Export-Import Policy as amended on 31.3.95 continued to be applicable till 30.4.1995, exporters were not adversely affected on this account

Inflation Rate

6458 SHRI ANKUSHRAO RAOSAHEB TOPE Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state

(a) whether the Reserve Bank of India has set up market operations to curb inflation,

(b) if so, the progress made in this direction, and

(c) the net result in curbing inflation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M V CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY) (a) to (c) In the recent years the Reserve Bank of India has been undertaking open market operations to regulate the growth of liquidity in the system. These operations are expected to help, *inter-alia*, moderate the rate of inflation in the economy

Deceleration in inflation rate is visible from the beginning of the current financial year. The rate of inflation (provisional) based on changes in the wholesale price index stood at 8.6 per cent on April 29, 1995 as against 10 per cent on March 25, 1995 and 11.8 per cent on April 30, 1994

Production of FCV Tobacco in A.P. and Karnataka

6459 SHRI V SOBHANADREESWARA RAO Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state

(a) the estimated production of FCV tobacco in the country particularly in the States of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka during 1994-95 and 1995-96,

(b) the likely production in other tobacco producing countries such as China, Zimbabwe, U.S.A. and other countries during the above period, country-wise, and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to ensure better price to the farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P CHIDAMBARAM) (a) The estimated production of Virginia Tobacco in the States

of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka for the year 1994-95 and 1995-96 are as under

	(Million Kgs)	
	Karnataka	Andhra Pradesh
1994-95	25 00	82 00
1995-96	25 24*	- **

* Crop size of virginia tobacco fixed by the Tobacco Board

** Crop size of virginia tobacco yet to be fixed by the Tobacco Board

(b) The estimated production of virginia tobacco in some of the major tobacco production countries during 1994-95 are given below. Data of production for the year 1995-96 is not available

	Country	(Million kg)
1	China	2688
2	Zimbabwe	171
3	USA	424
4	Philippines	39
5	Brazil	336
6	Argentina	78

(Source USDA December 94 - January '95)

(c) Steps taken by the Tobacco Board to ensure better prices to the farmers include, *inter-alia*

- (i) Planning and regulation of production of tobacco to match demand and supply
- (ii) Implementing various developmental and extension schemes to improve the quality and yield of tobacco
- (iii) conducting auctions to ensure accurate weighment, classification and competitive prices,
- (iv) negotiating with tobacco trade for fixation of Minimum Guaranteed Price for Flue Cured Virginia Tobacco, and
- (v) advising farmers through training programmes/meetings/publicity to adopt improved varieties and package of practices recommended by the Central Tobacco Research Institute

Export of Dyestuffe

6460 SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the countries where the dyestuffs are in good demand, and

(b) the steps taken by the Government to boost the export of dyestuffs and create new market for its exports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P CHIDAMBARAM) (a) Countries where the dyestuffs are in good demand are Bangladesh, Belgium, China Taipei, France, Germany, Hongkong, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Netherlands, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand, UK and USA

(b) Dyestuff is identified as an Extreme Focus Group of Items. The steps taken by the Government in this regard include liberalisation of the policy and procedures, provision of market development assistance and other promotional measures through the Basic Chemicals, Pharmaceuticals & Cosmetic Export Promotion Council (CHEMEXCIL), including for exploration of new markets

[Translation]

Investment in Nicaragua

6461 SHRI RAMPAL SINGH
SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state

(a) whether Nicaragua has invited India to make investment in their country,

(b) if so, the areas for which offers to make investment has been made, and

(c) the reaction of the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P CHIDAMBARAM) (a) and (b) During a recent visit of H E Ernesto Leal Sanchez, Minister of External Relations of Nicaragua to India, he invited Indian industrialists to invest in his country. The areas indicated for investment included telecommunications, tourism, timber, transportation, sea food, agro industry, mining and energy.

(c) Government welcomes and encourages such investments which are governed by the policy on overseas investments.

Import of Sugar by STC and MMTTC

6462 DR MAHADEEPAK SINGH SHAKYA
SHRI JAGMEET SINGH BRAR

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state

(a) whether the State Trading Corporation of India Ltd and the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation of India Ltd had made deals in the international market during 1995 for supply of sugar in June and July through forward contracts,